Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1-10. (Canceled).

11. (Currently Amended) An information processing system, comprising:

a first computing device configured to:

receive an information packet ~~from~~ through a global computer network and a first local area network; and

in response to at least the information packet and a state of the information processing system,

when the state of the information processing system is a first state, selectively output the information packet, such that the output information packet bypasses the first local area network; and

when the state of the information processing system is a second state, selectively execute a software application associated with the information packet.

12. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 11 wherein the first computing device comprises a network interface card.

13. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 11 wherein the received information packet originates from a client, and wherein the first local area network is coupled to the global computer network to the client.

14. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 11 wherein the information packet originates from a client, and wherein the first computing device is configured to:

in response to at least the information packet and the state of the information processing system, selectively output the information packet by outputting an encapsulated information packet, the encapsulated information packet including the information packet and a reference to a data structure of a connection with the client.

15. (Original) The system of claim 14 wherein the reference is included within a single header of the encapsulated information packet.

16. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 11 wherein the first computing device is configured to:

in response to at least the information packet and the state of the information processing system, selectively output the information packet to a second computing device for performing an operation in response to the information packet.

17. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 16 wherein the information packet originates from a client, wherein the first local area network is coupled to the global computer network to the client, wherein the operation includes outputting a response packet to the client through the first local area network and the global computer network, and wherein the first computing device is configured to:

in response to at least the information packet and the state of the information processing system, selectively output the information packet to the second computing device for outputting the response packet to the client, such that the output response packet bypasses the first computing device.

18. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 16 wherein the operation is part of a software application executed by the second computing device.

19. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 18 wherein the software application executed by the second computing device is a socket application.

20. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 11 wherein the information packet is addressed by the client to the first computing device, and wherein the first computing device is configured to receive the information packet from the first local area network in response to the addressing.

21. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 11 wherein the first computing device is configured to receive at least a portion of the state of the information processing system from the second computing device and a second local area network.

22. (Original) The system of claim 11 wherein the first local area network includes a hub.

23. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 11 wherein the first local area network includes a Layer 2 switch, and wherein the Layer 2 switch is coupled to a router device to the global computer network.

24. (Original) The system of claim 11 wherein the first local area network includes a Layer 3 switch, and wherein the Layer 3 switch is coupled to the global computer network.

25-34. (Canceled).

35. (Previously Presented) A method performed by a first computing device of an information processing system, the method comprising:

receiving an information packet from a first local area network coupled to a global computer network; and

in response to at least the information packet and a state of the information processing system,

when the state of the information processing system is a first state, selectively outputting the information packet, such that the output information packet bypasses the first local area network; and

when the state of the information processing system is a second state, selectively executing a software application associated with the information packet.

36. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 35 wherein the first computing device comprises a network interface card.

37. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 35 wherein the information packet originates from a client, and wherein the first local area network is coupled to the global computer network to the client.

38. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 35 wherein the information packet originates from a client, and wherein the method comprises:

in response to at least the information packet and the state of the information processing system, selectively outputting the information packet by outputting an encapsulated information packet, the encapsulated information packet including the information packet and a reference to a data structure of a connection with the client.

39. (Original) The method of claim 38 wherein the reference is included within a single header of the encapsulated information packet.

40. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 35 wherein the method comprises:

in response to at least the information packet and the state of the information processing system, selectively outputting the information packet to a second computing device for performing an operation in response to the information packet.

41. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 40 wherein the information packet originates from a client, wherein the first local area network is coupled to the global information network to the client, wherein the operation includes outputting a response packet to the client and the first local area network and the global computer network, and wherein the method comprises:

in response to at least the information packet and the state of the information processing system, selectively outputting the information packet to the second computing device for outputting the response packet to the client, such that the output response packet bypasses the first computing device.

42. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 40 wherein the operation is part of a software application executed by the second computing device.

43. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 42 wherein the software application executed by the second computing device is a socket application.

44. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 35 wherein the information packet is addressed by the client to the first computing device, and wherein the method comprises:

receiving the information packet from the first local area network in response to the addressing.

45. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 35 wherein the method comprises:

receiving at least a portion of the state of the information processing system from the second computing device and a second local area network.

46. (Original) The method of claim 35 wherein the first local area network includes a hub.

47. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 35 wherein the first local area network includes a Layer 2 switch, and wherein the Layer 2 switch is coupled to a router to the global computer network.

48. (Original) The method of claim 35 wherein the first local area network includes a Layer 3 switch, and wherein the Layer 3 switch is coupled to the global computer network.

49. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 11 wherein the first computing device is configured to output the information packet to a second local area network to a second computing device.

50. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 49 wherein the first computing device is configured to receive at least a portion of the state of the information processing system from the second computing device and a third local area network.

51. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 11 wherein the state of the information processing system is based at least in part on a state of a second computing device.

52. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 35 wherein selectively outputting the information packet comprises:

outputting the information packet to a second local area network to a second computing device.

53. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 52 wherein the method comprises:

receiving at least a portion of the state of the information processing system from the second computing device and a third local area network.

54. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 35 wherein the state of the information processing system is based at least in part on a state of a second computing device.

55. (Currently Amended) A server farm, comprising:

a first computing device configured to:

receive an information packet ~~from~~ through a global computer network and a first local area network; and

in response to at least the information packet and a state of the server farm,

when the state is a first state, selectively output the information packet, such that the output information packet bypasses the first local area network; and

when the state is a second state, selectively execute a software application associated with the information packet.

56. (Previously Presented) The server farm of claim 55 wherein the state of the server farm is based at least in part on a state of the first computing device.

57. (Previously Presented) The server farm of claim 56 wherein the state of the server farm is based at least in part on a state of a second computing device.

58. (Previously Presented) The server farm of claim 55 wherein the software application is a socket application.

59. (Previously Presented) The server farm of claim 55 wherein the first computing device comprises a network interface card.

60. (Previously Presented) The server farm of claim 55 wherein the first computing device is configured to selectively output the information packet by outputting an encapsulated information packet, the encapsulated information packet including the information packet and a reference to a connection data structure associated with a client.

61. (Previously Presented) The server farm of claim 55 wherein the first local area network comprises a Layer 3 switch coupled to the global computer network.

62. (Currently Amended) A computer-readable memory medium storing instructions that, when executed, cause a first computing device of an information processing system to respond to an information packet received ~~from~~ through a first local area network and a global computer network by:

when the information processing system is in a first state, selectively executing a software application associated with the information packet; and

when the information processing system is in a second state, selectively forwarding the information packet such that the forwarded information packet bypasses the first local area network.

63. (Previously Presented) The computer-readable memory medium of claim 62 wherein the information packet originates from a client coupled to the global computer network.

64. (Previously Presented) The computer-readable memory medium of claim 63 wherein the instructions further cause the first computing device to selectively forward the information packet by encapsulating the information packet that includes a reference to a connection data structure associated with the client.

65. (Previously Presented) The computer-readable memory medium of claim 62 wherein the software application is a socket application.

66. (Previously Presented) The computer-readable memory medium of claim 63 wherein the instructions further cause the first computing device to selectively forward the information packet by forwarding the information packet to a second computing device.

67. (Previously Presented) The computer-readable memory medium of claim 66 wherein the state of the information processing system is based at least in part on a state of the second computing device.

68. (Previously Presented) The computer-readable memory medium of claim 62 wherein the instructions further cause the first computing device to receive state information from a second local area network.